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INTRODUCTION

121 THIS book has been conceived, written, and published under the shadow that darkens the face of the world to-day. We have long believed that the furtherance of knowledge carries its own justification. But in recent years the legitimacy of pure, self-contained, detached science has become more and more dubious.[1] For no field of science is this more true than for the science of society, which has been pressed into the service of ruthless political aims, persecution, and suppression. Historical falsifications, racial doctrines, distorted dogmas of social necessities, have produced weapons no less deadly than those manufactured in factories and laboratories. A science that could be thus abused must no longer hope to recover its spurious detachment. It will find redemption only in closeness to the problems of our existence as society and civilization.

A student of society professing this belief in the social mission of science could not wish for more congenial material than the African society described in these pages. Indeed, I have not been satisfied with the bare description of a remote and strange social existence. I have tried, on a modest scale, to contribute to our understanding of the forces that shape the fate of societies—of our own society to-day as of that West African polity. Wars, suppression, persecution, and the reactions against these forces—you will find them all in this book. And you will find them so presented that their relation to the problems of our own social existence is never obscured. I believe that some lessons might be read from these facts: at least, I have tried to write them out as legibly as I could.

And another thing. Large parts of this book are dedicated to what has become known as 'practical' or 'applied' anthropology. It has been said that modern anthropology is destined to be of great assistance to colonial governments in providing the knowledge of the social structure of native groups upon which a sound and harmonious Native Administration, as envisaged in Indirect Rule, should be built. Let me say that I for one firmly believe in the possibility of such co-operation between anthropologist and administrator. Indeed I hope that this book will bring evidence of the fruitfulness of the co-operation. The form which it should take in the concrete case is perhaps not as yet well defined or universally accepted, and a few words must be said about the view taken in this book.

Obviously, the description of a native society as it might appear if it had never been touched by modern changes, even a mere compilation of facts to which the administrator could turn as to a dictionary or gazetteer, would be misleading because artificially simplified. It must be the duty of the anthropologist to demonstrate the native society in all its complexity, fashioned as it is by a multitude of social causes and effects, in which the efforts of administration represent causes and effects

[1] See J. D. Bernal, *The Social Function of Science*, 1939.

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among others. It may be debatable how far the anthropologist can go in this demonstration without introducing values of his own, without venturing criticisms or committing himself to concrete suggestions, and thus going outside his domain. But there can be no doubt about the legitimacy of his task to demonstrate alternative developments that have arisen, or are likely to arise, from administrative measures or their omission, from a new extraneous change or the unbroken continuance of an indigenous institution. If such a view is called implied or indirect criticism, I shall bear the blame lightly. For this 'indirect criticism' is nothing but a legitimate scientific device (used throughout the book) to assess the effectiveness of social forces—internal or extraneous, historical or modern. Moreover, all criticism stands or falls with the conception of principles and necessities of which it is an expression. Anthropologists and administrators may differ about these principles and necessities—we anthropologists are the first to realize this. But we feel that this divergence of view—if divergence there be—should be placed in the full light of knowledge; if our 'criticisms' are discounted, as indeed they may well be, the final decision should yet be inspired by them, and take the form of conscious choice.

Modern anthropologists will not lightly surrender their claim to the name 'explorer'. True, their work no longer takes them to peoples whom no traveller has yet encountered, and to countries which no white man's eye has yet seen. But they probe more deeply into the society of primitive man than any of the early explorers. They have set themselves the task of lifting the knowledge of primitive cultures beyond casual acquaintance, on to the plane of true scientific insight. They are explorers, not of the surface of the globe, but of an unknown social realm.

As an explorer, the anthropologist is faced with the difficulties of method and technique that beset all pioneer work. Anthropology in this new intensive sense is a young science, which is still evolving its methods of approach and has to find its instruments of research as it goes along. It has not yet been able even to map out with sufficient exactitude all the possible forms of society which its field-workers might encounter. Every new field-work may mean the discovery of unknown social structures unapproachable with the techniques hitherto used. This is indeed the plea that this book makes: a plea for understanding—and consideration—of its nature as a pioneer work, and for the difficulties and shortcomings inherent in such work.

The present book can claim to be regarded as a pioneer work in more than one respect. The technique of modern anthropology ('functional' anthropology as it is called by some) has been evolved on small islands in the Pacific, and in the study of small groups and cultures infinitely simpler than our historical civilizations. The West African society dealt with in this book is half a million strong. It is far from 'simple' or 'primitive'. Its social and economic complexity is comparable only with the civilizations of Imperial Rome, of Byzantium, of medieval Europe. Yet if the technique of anthropological field-work in the accepted sense must thus prove inadequate, the method of approach normally applied

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in the study of these historical cultures is equally barred. Very few historical records exist, and they are hardly informative from the sociological point of view. The people of Nupe have not yet risen to the stage of education producing written records and accounts of important events or institutions. With the exception of a few educated Mohammedan scholars whose co-operation I was able to enlist in the recording of folklore and historical traditions, I have been unable to use a single literate informant, for example, to keep diaries of important events, or to handle questionnaires. Lastly, the most essential evidence in the study of complex societies, namely statistics, scarcely exists. The statistics in this book were, with few exceptions, compiled single-handed and on a scale of the inadequacy of which no one can be more aware than the author.

I have described elsewhere the technique of inquiry which I applied, and need say nothing on that point here.[1] But it is necessary to describe the general plan of research I pursued, for it illustrates the methods by which I attempted to circumvent some of the difficulties just mentioned. I spent two years in the field, in the course of two expeditions in 1934 and 1935–6. From the outset I was confronted with the problem how to cover, in intensive study, the vast area inhabited by the Nupe people. The political configuration forbade the selection of one section to the disregard of others. The widespread political system had clearly to be studied at different points, in its centre as well as on its periphery. Moreover, a short preliminary survey already revealed the existence of considerable cultural differences within the tribe. The further my studies proceeded the more manifest became the significance of these differences as variations of a common pattern, the study of which was essential to the understanding of the forces that moulded the culture of the people. The investigation thus became perforce a comparative study within the framework of one tribe and one culture. At a certain stage of my investigation I even had to go outside this framework and devote some study to neighbouring groups—the Kakanda, Gbari, and Bassa—which, closely akin to the Nupe and partly their fellow citizens in the Nupe kingdom, might throw light on certain aspects of Nupe culture.

The main problem was to discover representative sections and centres for the study of this widely spread social system and its varying culture. I will not speak of the difficulties which I encountered in this task, helped as I was only by records and information which soon proved superficial and inexact. In the first six or seven months I was reduced almost to the method of trial and error: a very short stay in a new place would have been useless even merely to discover whether or not this place might prove a useful centre; and once I decided on a long stay the time was gone and could not be recovered even if the place turned out to be less profitable than I had expected. Let me admit that this did indeed happen in two villages (Mokwa and Sakpe) which I had made my centres upon the advice of various informants and which, as I discovered later, were not as significant or essential as certain other places would have been. However, certain general facts about the culture and the

[1] See 'The Interview Technique in Social Anthropology', in *The Study of Society*, chapter xiii, 1939.

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people could be obtained there as well as anywhere, and on my second expedition I could to some extent correct the mistakes of the first. On the other hand, I was unable to study one or two villages (e.g. Yeti, in the oil-palm area, and Kutiwengi, where an interesting variety of a certain religious cult is reported to exist), partly because I had discovered their significance too late, and partly because my time did not allow the inclusion of further centres and communities.

The main centres on which I based my investigation were: Bida town, with its surrounding belt of hamlets and small villages; the large villages of Kutigi, in the centre of Nupe country, and Mokwa, in the west; and finally Jebba Island on the Niger, which commands an important stretch of the river area. Each of these centres I visited several times. The repeated periods of study enabled me to check my material and to remedy oversights; often they led to the discovery of new points of view which only emerged from the comparison of the cultural variations typical of different areas and local communities. In addition I stayed for shorter periods in certain other communities in order to study a specific question or to collect certain comparative evidence. Thus, for example, I paid several short visits to the village Lemu, twenty miles north of Bida, because a new commercial crop had been adopted that year by the people of Lemu; and once I spent two weeks in Patigi (a quite uninteresting visit, by the way), because there the last descendants of the old dynasty of Nupe kings hold court.

Bida, the large capital of the country, required the longest time. Here also I began my studies of the Nupe language with the help of the English- and Hausa-speaking teachers of Bida Middle School. During these first months I carried out my anthropological work through the medium of Hausa, which I had studied before going to the field, and which is widely understood among the people of Bida, but from the fifth or sixth month of my stay I used Nupe exclusively. During the first expedition I spent altogether six months in Bida and the Bida area, in the course of three visits; three months in Kutigi, in the course of two visits; and one month each in Mokwa, Agaie, and Jebba Island. During the second expedition I spent five months in Bida, in the course of two visits, two months in Kutigi, in the course of two visits, three months, in one visit, in Jebba and on the river, and two months on travels to the neighbouring area of Gbari country and to Ilorin, Ibadan, and Lokoja, where I made a special study of the large Nupe colonies in these towns.

The difficulty of discovering in this large and complex culture representative areas and group sections, and of distinguishing them from others whose cultural life must be regarded as a variation of the main pattern, arises in a different form with regard to documentation. The problem here is how to prove with scientific exactitude the typical or non-typical nature of cultural facts and events, and how to present them convincingly as representative or as in some degree deviating from the norm. The distinction between typical and non-typical facts is primarily a question of frequency, and the ideal method of documentation would be one in which all descriptions and analyses were backed by statistical evidence. For obvious reasons such a method of documentation is rarely

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rather unusual dichotomous arrangement of certain chapters. It was necessitated by the nature of the material, by the contrasting configurations which dominate the cultural life of Nupe—urban and rural culture, Mohammedanism and paganism, the organization of the state and the organization of the village community. One dichotomous formulation I have made almost the *leitmotif* of this analysis, namely, the twofold classification of social systems, formulated most clearly by MacIver, into *Communities* and *Associations*. Let me quote his definition: Community is a 'circle of people who live together, who belong together, so that they share, not this or that particular interest, but a whole set of interests wide enough and comprehensive enough to include their lives'. And Association: 'a group specifically organized for the purpose of an interest or group of interests which its members have in common.'[1] These two categories are used in this book consistently in MacIver's sense, that is, as descriptive categories defining, not rigidly separated social entities, but rather two poles of a more fluid social reality of many shades and grades.

Again, it might be objected that the descriptive accounts in this book are frequently interspersed with theoretical discussions. I shall offer no apology. Description is meaningless and misleading unless supplemented by a clarification of the concepts and categories with which it operates, and by an assessment in terms of theoretical generalizations of the concrete data which it produces. This is doubly true of the complex and, from the viewpoint of traditional anthropology, unusual culture described in this book. Thus I was forced to devote comparatively long theoretical discussions to the examination of such concepts as 'tribe' (in Chapter II) and 'state' (in Chapter VI), to the analysis of social class in Nupe (Chapter VIII), and to an inquiry into the relation between economics and sociology (Chapter XX).

In the research programme of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, under whose auspices the present investigation was carried out, the study of culture change under the impact of modern Western civilization is assigned a prominent place. Culture contact in Nupe is not restricted to this most recent historical phase; nor does it affect only certain well-defined domains of social life—it pervades the whole history and the whole living culture of the people. Nor can it be said (with some anthropologists) that the study of modern culture contact entails specific methods of approach, applicable only to this one aspect of social development. It did not therefore seem feasible to concentrate its examination in special chapters. Every description and analysis contained in this book bears to lesser or greater extent also on the problems of culture contact and culture change, ancient or modern. Only in a few instances did the material lend itself to a separate treatment of modern culture contact. They will be found in Chapter X, under the heading 'Problems of Adaptation', in Chapter XVII, which is entitled 'Industrial Labour', and in Chapter XIX, in the section on 'Modern Business Methods'.

[1] R. M. MacIver, *Society, Its Structure and Changes*, 1931, pp. 9, 12, 13.

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Sleeping sickness is the great scourge of the country. A Sleeping Sickness Commission which visited Nupe in 1936 found 70 per cent. of the people infected—the highest figure in the whole of Nigeria. Bilharzia and other worm diseases are no less widespread. The prominence of venereal diseases is characteristic of Nupe as it is of the whole of Nigeria and indeed of the whole of semi-civilized Africa. Dysentery, malaria, and yaws complete the unhappy picture. It is worth noting, however, that typical deficiency diseases, including boils and ulcers, are comparatively rare. A statistical table, compiled from the attendance figures of the N.A. Hospital and Dispensaries in Bida Division, may illustrate the distribution of the more important diseases occurring in Nupe.

TABLE II

The figures for Bida Hospital refer to in-patients treated during April, July, October 1935 and January 1936. The figures for the Dispensary of Lemu give the attendance in January 1936. For another dispensary (Kutigi) only the order of frequency of the various diseases could be ascertained; it is indicated in the third line by roman numerals.

	Venereal diseases	*Malaria*	*Ulcer, scabies, &c.*	*Bronchitis, pneumonia*	*Dysentery, enterics*	*Eye-diseases*	*Rheumatic diseases*	*Leprosy*	*Bilharzia, worm diseases*	*Various*
Bida Hospital	35	14	15	13	9	3	5	2	80 per cent. of all cases	128
Dispensary Lemu	21	18	3	54	2	2	68	4	?	106
Dispensary Kutigi	II	IV	III	VI	?	V	I	10 cases	?	?

The description of health conditions has a more special bearing on the anthropology of the Nupe people. First, it is of a certain significance in connexion with certain cultural elaborations of the theme of disease among the Nupe;[1] second, it involves relevant questions of mortality and population movement—a subject to which we shall turn presently. Finally, with respect to mental disorders: psychology and sociology have long realized that certain tensions and maladjustments in the social system tend to manifest themselves in the sphere of psycho-pathology. We shall see that this correlation is true also of Nupe society.

POPULATION MOVEMENT

It is unnecessary to stress the importance of population studies for the understanding of a society and the nature and working of its institutions. But it may be necessary to justify the inclusion of a discussion on population movement in a chapter on environment. A first justification lies in the fact that, in a study of social organization, environment and popula-

[1] Most instances of this kind, however, I must leave for future publications. To one typical instance, the part which leprosy plays in the mythology and ritual of the *gunnu* cult, I have referred in the description of this cult in 'Gunnu, A Fertility Cult of the Nupe in Northern Nigeria', in *J.R.A.I.* lxvii, 1937, pp. 91–130.

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tion movement are to some extent methodologically of the same order. Both represent in certain respects 'data', given facts—factors external to the field of social phenomena which we investigate. Moreover, population movement and environmental conditions are inseparable from one another. Population movement reflects the effects of a complex of heterogeneous factors of which physical environment is one of the most important. It bears on possibilities and means of production, on nutrition, health, and livelihood in general.

But we shall also encounter the effects of other factors upon population movement, namely, specific 'cultural' factors—social and economic conditions, 'standards of living', moral concepts—and certain historical events which have influenced the distribution of population in Nupe country.

Birth-rate and Fertility

The Nigerian Census places Nupe birth- and fertility-rate at the bottom of the scale.[1] The proportion of live children per mother among the Nupe is 1·8 (the Yoruba are the only other tribe with an equally low rate), as against an average for all tribes of 2·6, and a fertility-rate of 2·4 in the tribe with the next lowest figure. Fifty-eight per cent. of Nupe women in the age group 30–39 are sterile, as against the total average for Nigeria of 22·7, and the next highest sterility rate of 27·1 among the Yoruba. These figures contain certain inconsistencies, and leave certain relevant questions unanswered. Thus the rate of live children per mother is equal among Nupe and Yoruba, while the proportion of sterile women among the Nupe is exactly twice the corresponding figure among the Yoruba. This would imply that infant mortality among the Yoruba is twice as large as among the Nupe—which seems hardly probable. Moreover, the proportion of live children per mother does not indicate to what extent the low figure is due to still-birth, infant mortality, constitutional sterility or, possibly, birth restriction. Finally, the statistics ignore the sociologically most important distinction between rural and urban areas.

The last point can to some extent be answered indirectly. The following figures give the birth-rate of three Nupe towns and one district (Kontagora) which has a very large proportion of Nupe among its inhabitants. Though only approximate these figures are well worth quoting in this connexion as they refer to localities representing different degrees of urbanization: the purely urban area of Bida town side by side with the much less urbanized village-capitals of Agaie and Lapai Emirates.

TABLE III

	Birth-rate per 1,000
Bida town	12
Agaie town	36
Lapai town	27
Kontagora Division	26

[1] *Census of Nigeria*, i, p. 55.

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and Kupa. Nupe proper differs from Ebe, or Bassa from Žitako, no less than Nupe differs from the languages of the other, related, tribes, Gbari and Kakanda. Dialects, language, language group, or linguistic class—these are all fluid categories, shading over into one another, and none of them capable of being identified with tribe or people.

Political group and language group thus imply the existence of the tribe, they do not explain it. The objective reality of political and linguistic organization leaves undefined the nature of that elusive human substratum, tribe or people. Nor can we count on any external symbols of tribal unity to help us with the definition. No tribal costume, or tribal emblems, exist, no tattoos or face-markings characteristic of all Nupe.[1] Yet to the Nupe man himself the Nupe tribe or the Nupe people is a clearly defined, unmistakable entity. He will rarely hesitate whether to describe the population of a district or village as Nupe or to put it down as alien, non-Nupe. This is, of course, an expression of traditional, historically accumulated, and transmitted knowledge. People and tribe themselves represent but the product of complex historical processes, contacts, and ramifications. These processes are no longer traceable to-day; but even if we could trace them they would tell us nothing about the nature of this social fact which we witness to-day, the classification of groups which do not speak the same language and do not live together in 'one country' unified by political organization, under the heading of 'one tribe'. The only definition of tribe that seems possible is the tautological statement that a tribe or people is a group unit the members of which claim to form a group unit. But perhaps there exists some other, objective, social reality which can help us to define this evasive concept?

We have not examined yet that paramount social reality, culture. But culture no less than language or living-together seems a fluid criterion of tribal unity. The only definition of tribe that we can give in terms of culture is to call the tribe a group possessing more or less the same culture—as it possesses more or less the same language or lives more or less in contiguity and 'togetherness'. In Nupe the unit of culture is in certain respects smaller than the unit of the tribe. The different 'countries' of Nupe represent different, and differently organized, cultural 'provinces'. Culture varies with environment and the productive organization which it entails; it expresses the changing dominant interests involved in social, political, and economic conditions. We can thus speak of a riverain Nupe culture, a hunters' or peasant culture, and distinguish town from rural culture, or the culture of the ruling group from the culture of the subjects and commoners. The cultural unit is also wider than the unit of the tribe. Nupe shares its political and social system with many tribes in West Africa, its traditional religion with neighbouring groups in the north, east, and south, its modern religion, Islam, with the whole Sudan. There is, in fact, good sense in speaking of a West African culture, or a culture of the inland groups of West Africa (as against the culture of the groups in the rain-forest and near the coast). Finally, culture appears also, as it were, crystallized in the form of

[1] See below, p. 22.

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a tribal culture, and the area of cultural unity reveals itself in some respects as coextensive with the tribe.

This is not merely an enumeration of isolated 'traits' selected at random. Each cultural factor which we reviewed affects, and is interdependent with, a wide range of other cultural factors. Culture, as anthropologists are realizing, is not a sum total of discrete traits; it possesses a definite structure and identity; its traits or elements, interdependent and mutually determined, build up a 'pattern' that tends towards coherence and consistency. This consistency—a functional consistency—reveals its existence to the student of the society in those cultural characteristics which he learns to regard as 'typical' or 'non-typical' of a culture. Each of the three cultural units which we enumerated shows, in some measure, the features of this consistency and identity. We will not here probe deeper into the nature of this consistency which seems to crystallize in different degrees of intensity and comprehensiveness. But we must clarify our concept of culture. So far, we have used the word in a rather vague sense. It is not the same culture, the same category of culture, which we discovered in these three relations between cultural and tribal unit. Cultural unity is, speaking generally, unity and correspondence in forms of social behaviour. When speaking of culture units wider than the unit of the tribe, we referred to a correspondence of behaviour among disconnected groups which we as students of cultures and peoples discover, classify, and name; it is a correspondence upheld by the unconscious processes involved in tradition and the perpetuation of custom; it impresses upon the groups a certain external *uniformity*. When speaking of the smaller cultural units which reflect common environmental conditions and common interests, common spheres, that is, of organized social life, we refer to something that goes beyond an externally visible uniformity. We mean a *conformity* of behaviour, a conscious unity created by, and embodied in, a common group life and the mutual control and adjustment of behaviour among the people who form the group.[1] The identification of cultural group and tribe implies, in the observer's interpretation, something of both.

But were this all it would enable us only to define the tribe as a natural species is defined—unknown to the subject of the definition. It would amount to colouring a certain space on a cultural map and calling it 'Nupe tribal culture'. It would not explain the crucial point in our argument, that the people are themselves conscious of the reality of the tribe. But culture has also another, new, meaning: it represents the conception of the people themselves. To the Nupe the tribe possesses a certain culture, specific to it and only to it, irrespective of variations within or similarities with groups without the tribal boundaries. Their awareness of this unity is expressed in the form of almost axiomatic statements, 'the Nupe do this or that', 'this and that is a Nupe custom',

[1] The historian may attempt to link the two, and derive 'uniformity' from an original 'conformity', that is, explain the present cultural correspondence among disconnected groups by cultural diffusion from a centre in which culture was identical with organized common life. But considerations of this kind remain outside this discussion.

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contrasting Nupe usages with customs and forms of behaviour characteristic of other tribes. You discuss, for example, the worship of human figures and idols of the kind you see in every village and every house in neighbouring Yoruba; or the face-like masks which the Yoruba and many southern tribes wear in their ritual dances; or perhaps the ceremony of spirit possession which the Hausa who live in Bida town perform on Bida market. Your Nupe informant will tell you positively: no —we have none of this; only Yoruba do it, or Hausa do it, as the case may be. Or you ask a Nupe man what all Nupe have in common. He will, as a rule, enumerate the same few traits. All Nupe, he will say, have the *ena gbarúfuži* (age-grade associations), all Nupe have the same system of *tici* (ranks), and all Nupe have the *gunnu* cult. Of the Nupe community in Lagos, a group which has forgotten its traditions and abandoned its language, I was told that they were still Nupe, because they still practised the Nupe *kuti* (ritual) of the *ndakó gboyá* (a ritual closely linked with the *gunnu*). Yet on closer examination this shibboleth of Nupedom proves only half true. Worship of idols and human figures exists also among the Nupe, in the riverain area; mask dances with face-masks are practised in a large section of the Nupe, in Mokwa and the neighbouring villages. The age-grade associations are common both to Nupe and Hausa. The rank system is common all over Northern Nigeria, but the details in its organization (very significant details) vary considerably among different groups of the Nupe. The *gunnu* cult exists also among Gbari, Gara, Basa Kom, and, what is more important, appears in Nupe itself in strikingly different forms in different parts of the country.[1] Finally, as regards the Nupe colonies outside Nupe country: I have visited the Nupe communities in Lagos and Ibadan. They are descendants of Nupe slaves and serfs, completely Yoruba-ized to-day in language, custom, and everyday habits. It is true they have the *ndakó gboyá* (which they call by the Yoruba name *igunnu*). But the *ndakó gboyá* is completely absent among the eastern section of Nupe, the Dibo, and also, I believe, among most groups of the Ebe, the northern section of the Nupe tribe.

Objectively, then, the rigid distinction of Nupe and non-Nupe on the basis of cultural characteristics often proves incorrect, and must do so, since culture is both wider and narrower than the tribe. True, there exist certain traits, or 'patterns' of traits, which are typical of all the Nupe, and possibly only of the Nupe—facts of material culture, social organization, religious beliefs. Like the Nupe who mean to uphold the identity of their tribe, I shall speak of things 'the Nupe do' or 'do not do'. True it is that the people admit the existence of certain cultural variants which qualify the cultural unity of the tribe. But the essential fact to us here is not the objective constellation of cultural traits. The identification of Nupe tribe with a core of Nupe culture represents a concept, a spiritual reality, rather than a critical interpretation of cultural facts. It reflects not the quasi-scientific calculation of more essential against less essential traits, or of a majority of common characteristics as against a minority of

[1] See *J.R.A.I.* lxvii, 1937, pp. 91–130.

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dissimilarities, but a phenomenon of a different order, a theory and ideology which ignores divergences *ex definitione*. It represents, in one word, the theory of the Nupe tribe. Our tautological definition of tribe then reads thus: a tribe or people is a group the members of which claim unity on the grounds of their conception of a specific common culture.[1]

To define the unity as conceptual does not make it less real or less significant. The awareness of unity is the basic element in all social unity. Consciousness of commonness is the primary element in social commonness. 'Communities, for all their external marks, are not objective things, they are spiritual realities.'[2] The tribe is not a community in the strict sense of the word: it lacks, as we have seen, the element of 'common life' and co-activity. But communities exist in different degrees of intensity; they have a different compass of social inclusiveness; there is not *one* community, but a complex hierarchy of communities.[3] The consciousness of a uniform culture defines the widest, loosest unit in the hierarchy of communities—potential rather than actual 'common life'. One turns easily into the other. 'One of the great processes of society . . . is that thereby the common is built out of the like, common interests growing out of what were at first merely like interests.'[4] We add that the consciousness of uniformity is the first step towards conformity of culture.

At the same time this uniformity of conduct which is conscious of itself is more than merely a potential stage of social existence. It represents, in itself, a specific social reality. Let me define here a vital concept of social existence which will occur throughout this book: social integration. The essence of integration is co-activity—potential or actual; social integration is predictable co-adaptation of behaviour in a group. It reveals itself in the certainty with which, in the group, certain actions of individuals or group sections will call forth appropriate response actions of other individuals or group sections. Now uniformity of behaviour is, sociologically, meaningless. Conscious uniformity, however, is predictable uniformity; the knowledge that a certain familiar pattern of activity will be repeated endlessly throughout the group represents a first form, and a degree at the same time, of social integration.

These two types of integration, uniformity and conformity, do not exhaust the forms of unity of behaviour existing in society. We shall meet in this analysis also with a third interpretation of cultural commonness or likeness, namely, the co-adaptation of behaviour involved in all organized associations. We shall speak of it as *co-ordination* of behaviour, for it represents essentially a planned, controlled organization of behaviour in the group, regulated and enforced by specific social mechanisms. In

[1] This definition claims to hold true for all large tribal groups ('peoples') of a similarly complex structure. It does not apply to smaller and more homogeneous groups. The factor of size and numbers is of importance. Evidently, for a small group on a Pacific Island tribe equals local group; or among American Indian tribes the tribal unit may coincide with the political group (see A. L. Kroeber, *Anthropology*, 1923, p. 232).

[2] R. M. MacIver, *Society*, p. 66.

[3] Ibid., p. 10; *Community*, p. 23.

[4] R. M. MacIver, *Society*, p. 8.

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121 this book we shall be dealing mainly with the political association, which seems characterized by two sets of factors: first, by its inclusiveness, being the relatively widest unit of co-ordination, and, underlining it, by the conception of a collective identity which is emphasized, above all, in inter-group dealings. And second, by the nature of its regulative mechanism (here the 'Government'), which rests, in the last resort, on the employment of force and coercion, and which controls both co-ordination for the purpose of internal stability ('law and order') and co-ordination for the purpose of external, inter-group, action ('offence and defence'). Cultural groups and communities have fluid boundaries; the association (in our case the political unit) is or is not rigid, but its boundaries—the boundaries of the group and sphere of conduct within which the co-ordination is to be valid—are by definition rigid. The consciousness of this validity defines the membership of the political association—in modern terminology, nationality. The political unit, unlike culture and community, is exclusive: one either is or is not a citizen of a country; one either comes or does not come under its laws and restrictions. However, one remains at the same time a representative of a culture which may not simply coincide with the cultural uniformity upheld by the political system. One remains also a member of a community or of communities which may exist apart from the 'common life' embodied in political co-ordination. Planned co-ordination of behaviour cannot ignore these other forms of integration—cultural likeness and commonness. Whether it utilizes them, creates them anew, or simply accepts their existence, they are the cultural raw material out of which it must fashion its unity.

The three planes of integration, and the group units which they define, thus cut across each other, overlap, and possibly grow out of each other, It will not always be easy to separate them clearly in the concrete description. The preceding analysis has to some extent defined their theoretical boundaries. In what follows we can attempt to isolate, in our concrete material, these three social realities: the integration of (conscious) cultural uniformity or the tribe; the integration of cultural conformity or the community; and the cultural co-ordination typical of organized society, above all, the political system and its paradigm, the state.

THE TRIBE

619 The conception of a common tribal culture is kept alive, as part of
184 Nupe tradition, by the transmission of traditional knowledge. It forms part of the general ideological background of all institutionalized behaviour. For many forms of customary behaviour membership of the tribe constitutes a convincing *raison d'être*. The tribe, lacking all unity of comprehensive co-operation, also lacks the unity of a common centre of cultural teaching. The consciousness of a common tribal culture is thus maintained by the scattered, disconnected mechanism to which the transmission of traditional knowledge is entrusted in Nupe. It is implied in the nature of this transmission that the same *raison d'être*—'we do this

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CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

THE STATE

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IT will have become clear that we regard the state as a specific form of political organization. Not every political system represents thus a state. This book can do no more than suggest a descriptive working definition of that difficult and much discussed concept. If we accept the definition of a political system suggested above, on the basis of its inclusiveness and the nature of its ultimate sanctions, we may regard the state as a social system in which these two characteristics crystallize in specific forms. Thus we arrive at the following threefold definition: (1) The state is a political unit based on territorial sovereignty. Membership of the state, i.e. citizenship or nationality, is determined by residence or birth-right in a territory. The state is thus inter-tribal or inter-racial, and distinguishes nationality from tribal or racial extraction.[1] (2) A centralized machinery of government assumes the maintenance of law and order, to the exclusion of all independent action.[2] (3) The state involves the existence of a specialized privileged ruling group or class separated in training, status, and organization from the main body of the population. This group monopolizes, corporately, the machinery of political control. It is regarded as a 'representative' group, and its actions and decisions are accepted by the people as actions and decisions on behalf of the country at large. These three factors must appear combined to justify our terming a political system a state.[3] The three factors of state structure represent interdependent social necessities which follow from one another and can be reduced to the basic principle of territorial sovereignty maintained over groups of different cultural and ethnic extraction. Such sovereignty must involve a certain measure of centralization, powerful enough to counteract separatist tendencies (Lowie), and also the creation—or continued existence—of a group of rulers and administrators who, by special training and tradition, are raised above the complexity of cultural and ethnic groups. Historically, an inter-tribal sovereignty of this nature can only have arisen from the ascendancy of one ethnic group over others. Certain students of society have interpreted this fact as implying the essential identity of state

[1] Cf. Sir Henry Maine's statement that the 'most nearly universal fact concerning the origin of known states' is that they 'were formed by the coalescence of groups' (*Lectures on the Early History of Institutions*, p. 386).

[2] Political order in the state is 'distinguished most of all by this trait, that it is a peaceful order which allows of no individual violence and only permits itself to enforce justice' (N. M. Korkunov, *General Theory of Law*, New York, 1922, p. 341).

[3] Obviously, there exist transitory forms in which only one or two of these political principles are manifest. The Beni confederacy represents such an incipient state organization. Yet if Lowie says: 'Some sort of state is a universal feature of human culture' (*The Origin of the State*, 1927, p. 44), we feel inclined to alter this to 'some sort of political organization'.

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origin and conquest, state organization and alien domination.[1] I will not go too deeply into this controversial question. But we cannot pass without comment the fact that the structure of the Nupe state as it exists to-day, with its ruling class of Fulani conquerors, and also its growth so far as we can with any claim to accuracy trace it back in history, indeed support this theory of the origin of the state.

Our discussion of the principles of state organization has thus led to an historical interpretation. Indeed the description of Nupe kingdom would be incomplete without the description of its growth and development. Its inter-tribal and inter-cultural nature cannot be fully understood without the inclusion of the historical viewpoint. Our threefold conceptual system of cultural unit, community, and state must itself be envisaged under the aspect of a dynamic process rather than of a static differentiation. For the deliberate political co-ordination of forms of conduct must tend to influence other spheres of cultural activity as well. In Nupe as everywhere, social patterns, common ideal types, spring up by themselves as 'natural products of long association'.[2] Political unification goes hand in hand with dissemination of culture and with an extension and reinterpretation (in the widest sense of the word) of racial and community boundaries. The 'inter-cultural' and 'inter-tribal' state gives way to a new 'state culture' and a new paramount group-unit, the nation.

It will be for a later chapter to examine how and how far this unification has been achieved in the Nupe state. But we must point out at once that this absorption of heterogeneous elements could only achieve a relative unity. The antagonism between the original heterogeneity and the subsequent unification is never allowed to disappear completely. It survives in certain forms of cultural and racial discrimination. The culture of Nupe, more correctly the culture typical of that section which formed the core in the historical growth of the kingdom, became the representative culture of the whole country, set up as a standard and 'ideal type' for the heterogeneous population. The sections of the Nupe tribe which were the carriers of this culture became the representative group of 'real' Nupe, sharply distinguished from the groups which have become Nupe-ized and absorbed in the state in the process of political expansion. A tribal and territorial section thus gained the position of a cultural *élite*, considerations of political status came to determine the evaluation of cultural features, and facts of cultural and tribal extraction were re-interpreted in the sense of political class distinctions. Here we understand the anomalies in the application of the name Nupe which we discovered in our discussion of Tribe and Culture: why the people in the capital regard the Nupe spoken in the districts and on the borders of the country as an inferior brand; or why the Nupe still speak of 'Gbari slaves' although culturally this tribal section has become indistinguishable from the Nupe proper. The 'real' Nupe call themselves *kintsoši*, Owners of the Land, as against all who have come later into the country —settlers, aliens, citizens of Greater Nupe. For all the groups outside of

[1] F. Oppenheimer, *The State*, 1923.
[2] A. E. Ross, *Social Control*, p. 222.

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the 'core' of the kingdom, whether they are Nupe, aliens, or Nupe-ized aliens, the Nupe have a common name: *zaži kati*, 'Outside Peoples', and the cultural evaluation implied in this term is felt acutely by these groups. It was extremely interesting to see how strongly the people of Lemu, Nupe-ized since three generations only, resented being called *zaži kati*, although they frankly admitted their Gbari origin. 'This name', they said, 'does not apply to us; we have been Nupe and Beni for a long time. The Gbari in the north and east, in Wushishi and beyond Katseregi, they are Outside Peoples.'

The Fulani conquest added a new chapter to this ambiguous history of cultural and political unification. But here 'representative' and 'absorbed' groups have exchanged places. The Fulani conquerors of Nupe, numerically an insignificant minority, were absorbed completely by the culture of the people whom they subjugated. Some of the Fulani came from nomadic herdsmen stock; the majority belonged most probably to the 'town Fulani' (as they call themselves), who had long been settled in the northern Hausa states and whose culture had become identical with that of Hausa. The former surrendered their identity completely; the latter had little, if anything, of their own to give. The Hausa traits visible in Nupe culture to-day did not reach the country through the Fulani; and Mohammedanism, the religion of the Fulani conquerors, was firmly established already at the time of the early Fulani infiltration. In Nupe the Fulani lost their language[1] and the last characteristics of their race and original culture. Racially, after generations of intermarriage, they are indistinguishable from their subjects; culturally, they are as much Nupe as the Nupe themselves. Many are even eager to step into the cultural heritage of the country over which they rule. They read and quote the history of ancient Nupe with the same enthusiasm and pride with which they learn or talk about their own historical heroes, the first Fulani emissaries.[2] Yet they remain a separate social group, conscious of its alien origin, and still distinguished by a special tribal name: they call themselves, and are called by their subjects, *goiži* (a name which distinguishes these settled, 'town Fulani' from the nomadic cattle people, who are known as *bororóži*), never Nupe. They are a 'representative' group in a different sense—the small *élite* of conquerors and rulers. The historical memory of their alien origin—for it is only this to-day—buttresses their detached social position. Racial antagonism which might have disappeared in a homogeneous community here, in the framework of the state, blending with the antagonism of class, remains alive, and even strengthens with its sentiments the inner tension of the society. It flares up with every open friction between rulers and ruled. We have again a political and social cleavage in the guise of 'racial' discrimination.[3]

[1] *Etsu* Mohamadu (1897–1914) was given the nickname '*Etsu* with two tongues', being the last Fulani ruler who—already a striking exception—could still speak Fulfulde.

[2] For some time I carried on a correspondence (in Hausa) with two of the most prominent members of the Nupe-Fulani community who had asked me to let them have all information I could obtain on the ancient history of Nupe.

[3] The following is a significant anecdote: the *Etsu* Nupe once confided to me

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Visualize this intricate racial and cultural pattern: two *élites* of different order—*kintsoźi* and Fulani—and surrounding them, almost in concentric circles, ethnic groups of varying cultural dissimilitude, each cultural grade also a grade on the scale of political evaluation. This is indeed the exact picture of the historical growth of Nupe kingdom. Through conquests and expansion, with fluid, ever-changing boundaries, Nupe kingdom maintained its conspicuous centre, the core of its political and cultural growth. Like a tree, it grew from the centre, and you can still trace the rings which mark its growth.

FOUNDATION OF THE KINGDOM

Before embarking on the historical account we must clarify the concept of 'history' as we propose to use it. For there is a certain ambiguity in the term 'history' as it is used by anthropologists. History can mean two things: first, what we may call 'objective' history, that is, the series of events which we, the investigators, describe and establish in accordance with certain 'objective', universal criteria of connexion and sequence. Second, the 'ideological' history, which exists in the society which we study, and which describes and arranges events in accordance with accepted traditions about past happenings and developments. The two may coincide (as they do in modern history); or the second may at least supply some source of information for the first. But also it may have significance only as a sociological datum *per se*, i.e. as a system of accepted beliefs and traditions influencing social behaviour in the group. As such, it is often indistinguishable from mythology and from what Malinowski has called significantly the 'mythical charter' of customs and existing cultural usages.[1] Different societies may stress in a different measure either the mythical, supernatural or the rational, pseudo-scientific nature of what they accept as an account of their past. The Nupe are what we may call an historically-minded people. The highest, constantly invoked authority for things existing is, to the Nupe, the account of things past—but an account which is clothed in terms of a sober, pseudo-scientific 'history'. Such is also the nature of the Nupe tradition of the origin of their kingdom. Only for the more recent periods do we possess 'objective' sources; the earliest period of Nupe kingdom is described only in their own 'ideological history'.

The earliest history of Nupe centres round the figure of Tsoede or Edegi,[2] the culture hero and mythical founder of Nupe kingdom. The genealogies of Nupe kings which are preserved in many places in Nupe country, and which have also found their way into the earliest written records of Nupe history which were compiled by Mohammedan scholars

his grievance against a certain little unruly relative of his whom he believed to have intrigued against him. He added: 'All Nupe are bad people, you know.' The said relative, himself, of course, as much Fulani as the *Etsu*, retaliated by informing me that 'all Fulani were liars'.

[1] B. Malinowski, in *Encycl. Soc. Sc.*, London, 1931, vol. iv, p. 640.

[2] Tsoede is, linguistically, a contraction of *Etsu*, or *'tsu Ede;* the Nupe more often use the name Tsoede, the Hausa the name Edegi.

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CHAPTER XI

ECONOMICS: RESOURCES

121 ALFRED MARSHALL, discussing possible definitions of Economics, says: 'The less we trouble ourselves with scholastic inquiries as to whether a certain consideration comes within the scope of economics, the better.'[1] If any student of society is entitled to follow this practical advice it is the anthropologist. Clearly, his working definition of economics must be as wide and fluid as possible. In his field every fact referring to what Marshall would call the 'business side of life' must claim his attention; even apparently irrelevant details in the technique of production, exchange, or consumption may be significant because new and not hitherto examined under the aspect of economic problems. Such a wide definition of economics must do justice to three realms of facts: (1) the primary resources, in the sense of the physical substratum on which all productive activity ultimately depends; (2) the technical processes and forms of group organization which make up production in the narrow sense, i.e. which actuate and bring into existence the resources; and (3) the specific needs that exist in a society and on the satisfaction of which the efficiency of a productive system must prove itself.

This, then, will be our definition of the realm of economics: the utilization of resources for the satisfaction of culturally (or socially) standardized needs. The description of the needs themselves, elements of culture as they are, is part of the general description of the society. The relation between resources and the satisfaction of the needs will be examined under the heading of Economic Balance. In the description of the technical processes, however, we shall have to limit our field. In accordance with the general theme of this book we shall be concerned more with the group organization involved in production than with technology proper; we shall view productive labour under the aspect of human occupation rather than under the aspect of technical development. The description of the primary resources and their distribution will form the subject of this first section. It will examine above all that primary and ultimate resource of every productive system, savage or civilized, land.[2]

[1] A. Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, 1930, p. 27.

[224] [2] For various reasons I have thought it better to omit from this book a discussion on hunting and fishing. Hunting is indeed of little importance in the present-day productive system of the country; it has been reduced everywhere to a secondary additional activity in the nature almost of a leisure-time occupation. In some parts of the country (e.g. in Bida and surroundings) hunting has disappeared altogether. Fishing stands in a different category. It is of paramount [226] importance in the riverain area. But a description of the greatly varying fishing techniques in use in Nupe country, and of the very specific forms of labour organization involved in fishing, would lead too far. For the economic system of the country at large fishing becomes important in so far as it produces one of the most highly valued trading-goods of the country both in local and export trade. This aspect of fishing will best be discussed at a later stage, in the chapter on trade.

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CHAPTER XIX

ECONOMIC BALANCE: EXCHANGE

● 12/ IN the discussion of economic balance we approach a group of questions which modern economic theory regards as the principle subject-matter of economics, viz. the relation between means which exist in some degree of scarcity and their alternative uses for the satisfaction of needs and wants. We shall examine 'balance' under two aspects: first, the relation between means and their uses in a wider sense, as they exist and are balanced in the economic system of the society at large. In this sense economic balance can be equated with exchange and exchange-mechanisms. Secondly, economic balance can be approached from the angle of the economic unit, and understood in the sense of the relation existing between means and wants in the narrow compass of individual or group economy. Economic balance here can be equated with the relation between capacity to produce and the ability to satisfy existing wants, i.e. between income and expenditure.

Although the two aspects refer to the same phenomenon, and are thus clearly interdependent, it is necessary to point out that the relation between the two does not invariably lie on the surface. Certain wants which greatly influence individual economy do not enter openly into general exchange relations. I refer here to wants which flow from specifically social sources—the dictates of religious obligations, of etiquette, status and prestige, political interests, and so forth. Over and above the overt exchange-mechanisms which we study under the first aspect of economic balance we shall have to introduce, in the discussion of the second aspect, a certain 'invisible' exchange—exchange against such imponderables as moral values, or forms of social appreciation. We will examine these two aspects of economic balance in the order in which we have enumerated them.

CURRENCY, MEASURES, AND PRICES

436 The description of Nupe production has clearly established the nature of Nupe economy as a highly complex exchange-economy based on money. A discussion of exchange-mechanisms may thus profitably begin with the examination of the units of exchange, the currency, and certain fixed measures used in trade.

Before the adoption of British money cowrie-shells constituted the currency of the country. Its use still lingers—not in the currency that is actually used (although this, too, has been mentioned),[1] but in an abstract sense, in the native methods of reckoning money. Certain standardized amounts, e.g. bride-price, certain traditional gifts and payments, are expressed more often in cowrie-shells than in modern money. In the country figures in cowrie-shells are quoted commonly, and in connexion with every kind of payment, including food-prices and suchlike. Cowrie-

[1] See p. 310.

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CHAPTER XX

ECONOMIC BALANCE: MEANS AND WANTS

THE PROBLEM

IN the discussion of economic balance in this new sense we meet with certain methodological difficulties. The wants on which resources are expended form part of culture—they reflect customs, conventions, tastes, fashions. The ideal solution would obviously be to include here a description of the whole culture, political life, social organization, law, religion, education, recreation, and so forth, from the economic aspect. Yet even if this were possible the question would remain whether we could not produce an arrangement more adequate to the present problem than this enumeration based on the qualitative contents of the different domains of culture. As we are dealing here with questions of equilibrium, 'the more adequate' arrangement would clearly have to be in the nature of a weighted or graded order, i.e. a scale of economic values.

How are we to build up this graded order of values? Economists agree that economic incentives can be arranged in an order of intensity.[1] Yet economics can express the intensity of incentives only in terms of the concrete efforts expended on their satisfaction. Broadly speaking, the existence or intensity of wants is derived from the fact that they are satisfied, and that certain wants are satisfied rather than others.[2] This circular argument precludes the possibility of studying wants apart from their concrete satisfaction. As anthropologists, having defined economic relations as relations between means and the satisfaction of *culturally accepted* needs, we must presuppose that the scale of values has to some extent at least an existence *per se*, that is, is of some permanence, and is buttressed by cultural factors independently of actual demands. Without this theoretical separation of wants and their concrete satisfaction we could never attempt to frame such questions as why certain forms of satisfaction are highly in demand while others appear to be neglected although their 'value' is recognized by the society. We could never point out that certain needs may be highly valued in themselves, and may yet be disregarded because of an insufficiency of means. These are questions of the rationality of bonds, of the motives behind wants, and of the efficiency of socio-economic systems in general (the main manifestation of which is the distribution of poverty and wealth). These questions, though admittedly beyond the scope of economics in the strict sense, deeply concern the student of society.[3]

We cannot demolish the circular argument of economics, which is, in

[1] L. Robbins, *An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science*, 1935, p. 86.
[2] D. M. Goodfellow, *Principles of Economic Sociology*, 1939, p. 28.
[3] The concept of poverty and wealth depends on the possibility of comparing the magnitude of incomes and forms of satisfaction secured by the income of different individuals. An inter-individual comparison of this kind is not admitted by theoretical economics. See L. Robbins, op. cit., pp. 137–40.

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121 fact, intrinsic to all generalizations about human behaviour. But for the purpose of sociological analysis we must attempt to extend this circular argument over as wide a range of interconnected phenomena as possible. Wants are discovered in the way people behave; but in this discovery we are, unlike the economist, not bound by statistical evidence alone, but can with the help of our field methods study the actual behaviour of individuals in all its aspects. Behaviour comes to include also verbal behaviour and expression of beliefs, convictions, and ideals. Verbal behaviour may thus also supply us with evidence of the intensity of incentives. We are driven to admit the existence, side by side with 'concrete' evaluations as revealed in economic decisions, of diffuse 'theoretical' or 'moral' evaluations which may be at variance with the former.

We are, then, operating with a two-dimensional system of wants and values. It has, I admit, no validity in the economic universe of discourse.[1] Seen from the economic point of view the 'theoretical' evaluation merely represents the weaker incentive which, in the eventual economic decision, has been subordinated to the stronger and thus relegated to the sphere of ineffectual theoretical concepts. But the acceptance of the two-dimensional scheme is indispensable to the adequate description of human conduct. The reality which it defines is primarily of a psychological nature: it embraces the motivations and repressions behind the economic decision, and the significant attitudes and responses which accompany it—hope and regret, disdain or resentment, expectations of betterment or the consciousness of failure. Yet every one of these psychological reactions may become a concrete determinant of conduct and thus a potential drive for readjustment either in the narrow sphere of social mobility, i.e. in attempts of individuals to improve their position, or in the wider sphere of collective attempts to bring about (by force, if necessary) changes in the socio-economic system. We need say no more on this point: it is illustrated abundantly in the history of society.

We will make two further admissions: first, that the divergence between theoretical and actual evaluation is frequently the symptom of a merely temporary lack of adjustment, and thus of social change; and second, that the divergence is partly due to a certain ambiguity in the concept we are using of 'wants' or 'needs'. The first does no more than underline the significance of the phenomenon to the student of society. As regards the second, the following examination of the nature of the divergence will show that the ambiguity in the concept of 'wants' is due, not to inexact formulation, but to the nature of society. The divergence between actual and theoretical evaluation occurs in three different forms.

(1) The simplest and most familiar form of this divergence is that owing to time-lag. The actual evaluation frequently takes account of changed wants, while the theoretical evaluation still maintains pre-change standards.

[1] I suspect, though, that this dual definition of 'concrete' and 'theoretical' evaluation forms a parallel to a similar distinction made by economic theory, namely, between the 'real value' of commodities and their 'exchange value'.

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(2) The divergence may be due to a differentiation within the structure of the group whose economic decisions we are studying. To put it schematically: individuals act always as members of groups; but every individual is at once member of different groups of progressive inclusiveness—family, kinship group, local group, tribe, state, &c. His conduct may thus be influenced by possibly conflicting standards of evaluation obtaining in the different groups. His economic decision may follow one standard of evaluation, while he relegates an alternative standard which he is either unable or unwilling to carry into action to the plane of 'theoretical' values. We may then find that the 'concrete' values adopted by individuals as members, for example, of the narrower group, appear as 'theoretical' values in the larger, comprehensive, group, and vice versa. Disregard of the alternative standards of evaluation owing to inability is typical of most forms of class stratification and, potentially, of class consciousness (in the economic sense). For here we see groups act according to evaluations derived from the sufficiency of means in their section, but yet remain conscious of wants and satisfactions obtaining in other, more fortunate, strata of the group at large. Disregard of alternative standards of evaluation owing to unwillingness, on the other hand, will mostly be found to indicate differences in social insight, which varies with position in the social group, with age, and experience. Thus the young labourers who preferred to purchase clothes and other temporary attractions rather than save money for marriage acted according to the ideals of the younger generation and disregarded the value which, as members of the kinship group, they should have recognized—values, moreover, which are upheld by the executive organs of the group, the elders and the family heads. We shall base our examination of the Nupe scale of values mainly on the widest range of social insight and (unless expressly stated) shall assess economic wants from the viewpoint of the family head.

(3) A final, most elusive, divergence is that between felt wants and abstract needs.[1] We must realize that the social significance of organized human conduct, shaped as it constantly is by convention and custom, is not exhausted in the attainment of a certain single satisfaction (which alone was aimed at), but normally implies the effectiveness of other wants and needs besides. Their satisfaction is attained, as it were, automatically, with the satisfaction of the conscious want, and may be embodied in the very conventional form which the satisfaction must take. Radcliffe-Brown has shown that the paramount ubiquitous need of this kind is that inherent in the structure of society itself, of integration and stability. Now, concrete evaluation may in certain cases run counter to that need, which would be relegated to the ideological validity of theoretical wants. These social needs are rarely present in the minds of individuals—except in those of far-sighted individuals acting as executive organs of their group. Rather the student of society hypothesizes their existence; for to him they reveal their existence and effective-

[1] Goodfellow assigns the study of 'wants' to economics proper, and the study of 'needs' to a separate discipline, which he calls Social Economics (op. cit., p. 275).

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●12| ness indirectly, through certain significant changes in the stability of social life.

With these methodological viewpoints in mind, we may now attempt to build up our scale of values. We cannot hope, of course, to make it exact in every grade or detail; but we can trace its outline which gives us the extremes of the scale—its maximum and minimum points—and, between them, certain well-defined marks. I propose to adopt a three-fold approach.

(1) We find the 'minimum point' of our scale in the demands upon resources which refer to the satisfaction of the physiological necessities of life—'primary needs', in Malinowski's terminology—above all, nutrition and shelter. With Malinowski, we realize that these needs never exist as such in society, that is, in the form of undisguised elementary impulses, but already appear in a certain conventionalized form, shaped and elaborated by culture.[1] Closely linked with these wants is another group which we may call, with Malinowski, 'derived' wants, in the sense that they refer to the maintenance of the productive organization by means of which the 'primary needs' are satisfied.[2]

(2) On this second stage we shall examine certain more or less fixed demands upon resources which are involved in institutions and customs and which are accepted with little variation, irrespective of status or wealth, throughout the society. Typical instances of these demands are bride-price and taxation.

(3) We study the wants and forms of satisfaction apparent in the conduct of the recognized *élite* of the society. They define the 'maximum point' of our scale, and we may take them to represent the ideals and generally desirable things—the things 'one ought to be able to afford'—in the opinion of the society at large.[3] I must add that this last assumption is justified only if we can prove that no rift runs across the ideological framework of the society separating the desires and tastes typical of the various social strata. We must reckon with the possibility of individuals of the lower social strata being well content with their 'station'; or of tastes and desires of higher social strata showing a caste-like exclusiveness. We shall see later that one of the main characteristics of Nupe society lies in the absence of a self-limitation of the former kind; the latter kind of rift, on the other hand, is negligible, and is restricted mainly to the prerogatives of royalty, for example, to the traditional insignia of rulership, the rules of dress and food of the Nupe kings, &c. In modern Nupe even these caste-like prerogatives have mostly disappeared.

[1] I cannot argue here the question whether or not sexual satisfaction should be included among these 'primary needs'; I have put sexual desires in the second group of wants mainly because they are subject to a much more complete cultural 'elaboration' and institutionalization.

[2] It will be seen that this definition is narrower than Malinowski's definition of 'derived needs', which can, in fact, be extended over the whole field of culture.

[3] In this assumption, which is justified by the stratified structure of Nupe society, we differ from Dr. R. W. Firth, who states that 'there is no final organization in primitive societies in the sense of a single individual or ruling group of individuals who are in a position to dictate all choices' (*Primitive Polynesian Economy*, p. 24).

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But we must reckon also with another ideological rift in tastes and desires, which would affect all three stages of our investigation, namely a rift which might be involved in the complex and composite nature of Nupe culture. It would separate, not social strata, but different sections of the population, different cultural groups within Nupe society. A rift of this kind does, in fact, exist with respect to the different cultural standards valid in town and country, in the Mohammedanized capital and the pagan or semi-pagan districts.

STANDARDS OF LIVING: NECESSITIES OF LIFE

The extent to which the economy of an individual or a family group is able to incorporate into its 'balance' wants placed lower or higher on the scale of cultural values gives us what is generally called the 'standard of living'. We shall find that it is possible to arrange these varying standards in certain well-defined groups or grades, and to embody them in a comprehensive economic stratification of the society.

It will be best to begin with concrete illustrations of the economic balance achieved in Nupe households. Out of fifty household budgets which I have recorded I propose to select five representative examples, taken from different localities and differently organized household groups, in which we can study the main variations that occur. All these examples refer to peasant households. Unfortunately I found it impossible to work out budgets of this kind also for craftsmen and 'free professions' (with two exceptions to be quoted later). Their extremely fluid economy presented great difficulties; to reduce, in their case, income and expenditure to exact figures would have demanded much more time than I was able to devote to this task. However, just because these types of economy are more fluid and more easily adjustable to varying wants, they are of less interest to us than the more restricted and more rigid economy of the agriculturist.

Let me say a few words about the method by which I arrived at these records of Nupe household economy. I have examined households in Bida, Doko, Lemu, and Kutigi. The figures referring to the total farm-yield, and to the proportion of the produce kept for consumption or set aside for sale, were ascertained by inquiry. The nature of Nupe agriculture—the series of successive harvests, and the widely varying arrangements with regard to storage and sale of produce—precluded any more direct approach (e.g. by measuring the yield or the stores). However, there were important safeguards: first, as we have seen, the Nupe farmers are well acquainted with the use of standard measures, and indeed themselves use them to calculate their yield. Moreover, after a number of preliminary inquiries (in which I was helped by reliable informants) I could already form an opinion as to likely averages and individual deviations. Finally, whenever any dubious figures emerged I could verify them by independent inquiries of other household members. In this respect the tendency of the Nupe farmers to keep track of the contributions of the various family members to the common store proved of considerable assistance.

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its distinctive character; nor do they share the position of political supremacy which the down-stream Kede have assumed. They are, culturally, a semi-riverain group, like all the other Nupe sections whose villages lie interspersed between Kede settlements, and politically, again like these sections, subjects of the (down-stream) Kede ruling group. Thus when we shall speak in the following of the Kede political organization, we shall refer to this latter group only. The upper-stream Kede will be classified under one heading with the other semi-riverain Nupe sections, as, indeed, in native eyes, they are closer to the *kintsozi* than to the 'alien' immigrant group on the lower river. But the comparison of the two Kede groups will become of special significance at a later stage of this analysis. This strikingly unequal development in what appear to be two sections of the same tribal group should help us to isolate the factors, social or otherwise, that have moulded the political structure which we are studying.

III. Economic System

A demographic and political constellation such as we have discovered in Kede country is clearly the result of considerable group movements, possibly covering a long period. To be fully understood, such situation demands, first of all, an analysis—historical analysis, if possible—of tribal settlement. Before discussing Kede settlement, however, it is necessary to give a short description of the economic situation in the country. For, as I propose to show, the nature of Kede economics has decisively influenced the planning of Kede settlement and, indirectly, the whole political development of the tribe.

We can be very short as regards the economic system of the semi-riverain groups. They are in the main farmers, who cultivate the fertile marshland areas in the river valley. They are, besides, fishermen on a small scale, fishing from their small dug-out canoes in the backwaters and creeks of Niger and Kaduna—never in the main river, where the Kede alone are entitled to fish.

The Kede, on the other hand, are fishermen and canoemen of renown. Their name is known all down the River Niger, in districts far outside Nupe country;[1] and in their own part of the

[1] Their familiarity with the river has led to a considerable number of Kede being employed as sailors, skippers, and pilots by the Royal Niger Company and the Nigerian Marine Department.

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in areas to which political rule could never be expected to follow. Common interests and culture, community life, intermarriage stretch as far as these outposts. Moreover, cultural assimilation and intensified contact have removed some of the barriers which formerly separated the Kede from neighbouring groups. The facts of common culture, economic co-operation, and community life thus no longer converge to cement the solidarity of a ruling group, but merely outline the much vaguer unit of a scattered ethnic group which has abandoned all claims to political self-realization.

IX. The Evolution of the Kede State

Our examination of the Kede State and its history does neither support nor refute the theory of the origin of the State which, accepted to-day by many students of society, derives every State organization from an original invasion and eventual conquest of one ethnic group by another.[1] Our data have shown political domination of one ethnic group by another to be a factor of paramount importance; they also revealed the occurrence of clash and conquest—though not on the comprehensive scale implied in this theory of the State; but they do not prove an original group invasion, beyond that which we must relegate to the era of mythical and thus unverifiable events. Our data can, in fact, also be taken as evidence for an 'internal diversification'[2] and a gradual emergence to political supremacy of one out of a number of ethnic groups.

Our data relating to Kede expansion in recent times, on the other hand, tend to confirm another sociological theory which concerns itself with social origins—namely, the theory which holds that migration and colonization are never a result of over-population, but rather an expression of that 'spirit of hope' and 'enterprise' which is absent in countries with over-population.[3] Can we accept this description of the growing Kede society as a final statement? Is the emergence of a tribal section to a dominant political role fully explained by this reference to psychological characteristics?

Our analysis of Kede political organization has emphasized a somewhat different aspect; it outlined the political system in its

[1] See F. Oppenheimer, op. cit.
[2] R. Lowie, op. cit., p. 40.
[3] A. M. Carr-Saunders, *The Population Problem* (1922), pp. 299 ff.

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dependence on economic factors and, tied up with them, environmental conditions. The impetus to colonization and expansion, as we saw it, was already implied in the way in which the people gain their livelihood. We can render this argument even more conclusive; the cultural situation in the river valley itself offers us the comparative material from which to draw our deductions. We remember the upper-stream Kede, who, neighbours, fellow tribesmen and in many details of culture close relations of the down-stream Kede, yet do not share their political achievements—and also do not share their productive system and economic life in general. We can even go further and point to the environmental factors on which the economic system of the Kede in turn depends. The environment in which the upper-stream Kede live indeed forbids a development of river trade and traffic similar to that evolved by the sister group. The river in their area is narrow, barred in several places by rapids and rocky, frequently dangerous, passages, and generally impassable during half the year. On its banks there are few settlements, and the hinterland is thinly populated, inhabited largely by comparatively poor and backward groups. Hold against this the down-stream country: a broad river, navigable all the year round, the banks covered with numerous villages and the hinterland a rich, populous country with highly developed trades and crafts.

It will have been seen that I am speaking here of environment in a rather wide sense, including, beside the physical constellation of the country, also such factors as distribution of population and the existence of a certain type of civilization. Methodologically, these facts stand in the same category as physical environment proper. True, they are essentially historical facts, representing the results of various historical developments. These developments themselves, however, are beyond our line of vision; their results—the fact that the Kede area happens to lie in the centre of a rich and powerful kingdom—are to us 'unique events' in the phraseology of the historian, extraneous factors of chance, which, like environmental facts, we have to accept as ultimate data.

Let me admit that this causal chain, environmental conditions—economic enterprise—political system, is not fully conclusive. It is weakened by another aspect of our comparative evidence—namely, the fact that the *kintsogi*, who are also close neighbours and tribal relations of the down-stream Kede, and who share with

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them the same 'stimulating' environment, appear to have remained unresponsive to it. I have no explanation to give. Does this mean, then, that we have to fall back on the psychological interpretation of the kind quoted above?

But the environmental and economic 'determinism' which these conclusions have put forward was not meant to exclude completely the contribution of psychological factors—that is, the social motive power that may lie in the temperamental and general psychological dispositions typical of a group. Nor was it intended to minimize the decisive part that enterprising and far-seeing individuals must have played in the creation of the Kede State. The river colonization was undoubtedly the work of a people fully deserving the attributes 'adventurous', 'courageous', or 'possessed of a spirit of enterprise'; it must also have been closely bound up with the leadership of certain outstanding individuals: think of the man who was responsible for the Kede throwing in their lot with the British, or the Kede chiefs who so successfully utilized the encouragement of the Niger Company for the expansion of their country. But two facts must be borne in mind when defending this psychological and 'individualistic' theory of social origins. First, the psychological characteristics which might be made responsible for the achievements of the group are not *racially* determined (i.e. by heredity)—the dissimilar social system of the upper-stream Kede proves this to the full; they remain an expression of, and a perfect adjustment to, environmental conditions. And, second, these psychological characteristics do not reflect the effectiveness of some spontaneous, as it were, self-contained, psychological force, but are fostered and formed planfully by the existing social system and its cultural demands, to which the individuals, generation after generation, learn to adjust themselves. How much in the gradual social development of the Kede State was due to the selective effects of environment, and how much to the spontaneous actions of exceptionally gifted individuals who, at one point of Kede history, may have shown their people a new way of life, is one of these questions of social origins to which, again, we have no answer.

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Bida

Nigeria: Pottery. **Nicholson.**

Bida (Nupe) Pottery. *By W. E. Nicholson.*

These notes refer to one only of the groups of potters in Bida, Niger Province, and the actual workers observed belong to Augi's house in the Quarter of Natsu.

I. *Workers.*—All the operators are women. The family came originally from Sokoto, but the mother of the present potters is said to have learnt the trade from a Yoruba woman, *i.e.*, the technique may be Yoruba or Nupe in origin. All are Mohammedans, so that the survival of tabus, etc., in the craft is not to be expected, and no trace of them was found.

Two varieties of article are made:—

(i) Small water jug, chiefly used for ablutionary purposes, called in Nupe *Masuge* (equivalent to the Hausa *Buta* or *Shantali*—Man, 1929, 34).

(ii) A larger water-container called in Nupe *Dukã-agutã* (equivalent to the Hausa *Pukunyu*—Man 1931, 186).

The following notes refer to the former only of these.

II. *Preparation of the Clay.*—Suitable clay is found in the swamps of the Gbako river at Badeggi, about 10 miles east of Bida. Itinerant vendors from this village bring it round for sale, and it costs about 10d. per cwt. During part of the rainy season floods prevent its collection. The clay is pounded to powder in a wooden mortar identical with that used in the preparation of food. It is levigated—

(i) Usually by the addition of powdered potsherds: this powder is sifted before being added to the clay, through a sieve made of slivers of bamboo.

(ii) Sometimes native bricks of sun-dried mud are burnt and powdered and used instead of potsherds.

After the addition of the levigating material the clay is wetted until it attains the right consistency.

III. *Building of the Pot.*—(*a*) Old cloths are spread on the ground and the operator places in front of herself a flat sand-stone slab about 1 inch thick; it is said that these stones are purchased from the Bead-makers and that they come from further south in Ilorin country; they are 'natural,' *i.e.*, pieces of stratified rock which splits into suitable thicknesses; the slab is well dusted with powdered potsherds to prevent sticking. A ball of clay (*a* (i)) is placed on the slab, manipulated into a 'pancake' (*a* (ii)) and beaten out thin with a stone hand-beater; any

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A FIELD EXPERIMENT IN RACIAL[1] PSYCHOLOGY[2]

By S. F. NADEL

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I. The problem

In the present article I shall describe certain attempts at attacking, experimentally, and in the field of so-called primitive cultures, the problem of a possible correlation between diversity of culture and psychological differentiation. This investigation differs essentially from the psychological experiments on the mentality of primitive peoples which have been carried out so far. Most of these experiments were devoted to the study of lower mental processes and to the measurement of psychophysical reactions. Where higher mental functions were involved, as in the investigations of Porteus(1) and Garth(2), the main aim was still a quantitative analysis of psychological responses with respect to some

[1] The term 'racial' in the title needs explanation: it has been used here simply for want of a better term. It refers here not to racial groups in the strict sense but to groups which, in loose terminology, are generally referred to as tribes, peoples, or communities, i.e. cultural groups. The term culture-psychology, however, with its philosophic connotation, does not recommend itself.

[2] A paper read at the Manchester meeting of the British Psychological Society, April 1937.

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universal scale of mental characteristics or abilities. The present investigation is in no way concerned with measuring or rating psychological reactions and characteristics. It is devoted to a qualitative analysis, more precisely: a qualitative comparative analysis, of the higher mental processes—perception, memory and thinking processes—of two primitive peoples. Its primary aim is to discover 'typical' psychological traits among groups of different culture, in other words, to study by means of a psychological experiment what Professor Bartlett calls the "preferred, persistent tendencies of groups" (3), p. 255).

During two anthropological expeditions to West Africa (Northern Nigeria) I had made some effort to combine anthropological work with experimental psychological studies. I had been working for some time among two neighbouring tribes, the Yoruba and the Nupe. These, living side by side, in the same material environment, under the same general conditions and at the same stage of civilization, yet present a picture of two entirely different, almost antagonistic cultures. This seemed an ideal situation for an investigation on the lines of such 'racial' or culture-psychology. Thus I carried out the same series of experiments among both groups, and I shall describe in the following pages some of the results of this comparative study.

II. The experiments

I propose to describe two sets of experiments which correspond very closely to the type of experiment used by Bartlett, namely experiments on *Description* and *Repeated Reproduction* of pictures and stories (3), p. 45 *et seq.*). The pictures were photographs of objects or scenes with which the experimental subjects were all familiar. Some of them were enlargements of my own photographs taken in the country, and some were taken from the *Illustrated London News* and other illustrated papers. The story which was used I composed myself. It was modelled on a native folk-tale of a type fairly common both among Nupe and Yoruba, but with a view to bringing out certain psychological test facts. The experiments were, for practical reasons, carried out in schools, namely in the Government Middle Schools in which teaching is done by native teachers and to a large extent in the vernacular. The two series which I am describing here were done with 20 students from each community, of the age of 15–18. All experiments were done in the vernacular; among the Nupe I myself carried out the experiments, as I was speaking the language fluently; among the other group, the Yoruba, I trained two teachers to carry out the experiments for me.

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VII. SUMMARY

1. The aim of this investigation was to study, by means of the psychological field experiment, the correlation between diversity of culture and psychological differentiation.

2. Two primitive groups were studied, two tribes in Northern Nigeria which, living under similar conditions, yet show marked differences in their culture.

3. The experiments were carried out with school boys of the age of 15–18. The selection of the subjects, however, insured that the experimental groups were representative of the culture at large.

4. The experiments examined the repeated reproduction of a narrative, and the description and remembering of a number of pictures. Both the narrative and the pictures represented a material with which the experimental subjects were thoroughly familiar.

5. The results show a marked difference in the responses of the two groups. In the story experiment one tribe laid stress on logical and rational elements while the other showed distinct appreciation of situational facts and connexions of time and place. In the picture experiment the response of the first group was meaning-oriented, the response of the second enumerative and appreciative of spatial arrangement.

6. Between the cultural differentiation and the psychological differentiation there exists close correspondence. The dualism of culture and psychological responses is incidental; the investigation reveals in fact three different psychological 'types' distributed in different proportion among the two groups.

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